



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Tuesday - December 17, 2002**

- ***In the West***, scattered rain and snow showers linger from the ***Pacific Coast to the Rockies***, boosting soil moisture for drought-stressed pastures and winter grains, and improving high-elevation snow packs.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry weather continues to favor overwintering wheat. However, snow cover and soil moisture reserves remain limited across the ***northern and central High Plains***, leaving much of the winter wheat crop exposed to potential weather extremes.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, minimal snow cover and mild, mostly dry conditions are benefiting livestock and promoting off-season fieldwork.
- ***In the South***, wet fields continue to slow fieldwork, including winter wheat planting and final summer crop harvesting, despite several days of warm, dry weather.

**Outlook:** Cold, dry weather will prevail into mid-week across the ***Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States***, while a developing storm system in the ***central U.S.*** will bring rain and snow to the ***upper Midwest and the Great Lakes States***. Farther south, showers and thunderstorms will sweep across the ***middle and lower Mississippi Valley*** and into the ***East***. Meanwhile, a high-pressure system will slowly build across the ***West***, bringing a gradual end to precipitation from the ***Pacific Coast to the Rockies***. However, another Pacific storm may bring additional heavy precipitation to ***California*** by week's end. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for December 22-26 calls for below-normal precipitation across the ***northern Plains and Pacific Northwest***, but above-normal amounts in the ***Southwest, Southeast***, and parts of the ***central and southern Plains and Great Lakes States***. Below-normal temperatures are forecast in the ***West***, while warmer-than-normal weather is expected in the ***Southeast***.

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